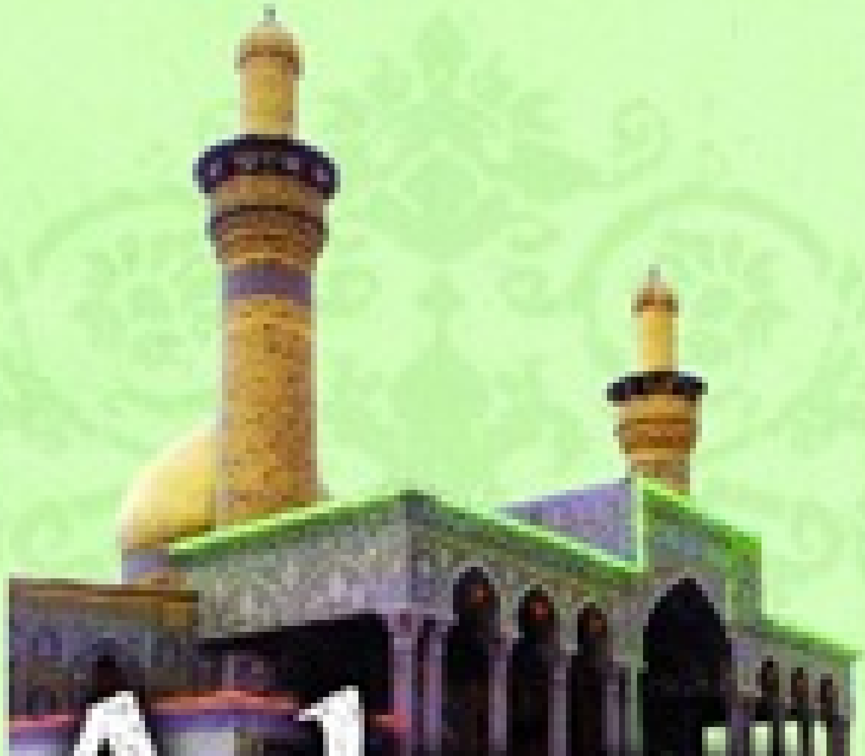


Ashura

Poems in English

Explained and Annotated

Volume 1

Compiled by:
Muhammad-Reza Fakhr-Rohani

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

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ASHURA POEMS IN ENGLISH

EXPLAINED AND ANNOTATED

VOLUME ۱

:Compiled by

Muhammad-Reza Fakhr-Rohani

:KARBALA

IMAM AL-HUSAIN'S SACRED SANCTUARY

AH ۱۴۲۸

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Dedicated as the least mark of devotion, servitude, and reverence to:

THE PRINCE OF MARTYRS, IMAM AL-HUSAIN,

those who willingly sacrificed their lives

for God’s satisfaction in his cause on Ashura,

and all those who profoundly respect him

and aspire to be his adherents and pilgrims.

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FOREWORD

Praise is all to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds. Praise and salaams are to the Prophet Muhammad b. Abdullah and his noble and infallible Ahl al-Bayt . Denunciation and curse are to their foes forever until the Judgment Day. Amen!

Elegy is a literary technique which enables the poet to compose fine pieces of poetry. In elegy, the mind and soul of the poet get elevated, for he finds himself confronted with the mysterious phenomenon of death. Faced with the mysteries of life and the vicissitudes of times and fate, he tries to find a justification for that eternal silence.

As is well known, elegy is an important element in the literature of the adherents of the Ahl al-Bayt school of thought. It is here that in elegy deep sorrow gets commingled with fierce wrath, leading to a type of sentimental literature. In like manner, it may also be regarded as a type of political literature, because this wrath, sometimes discernible therein, is indicative of political thought which has found expression in this manner.

It can hardly be forgotten that beyond the martyrdom of Imam al-Husayn b. Ali there were political reasons which can

never be severed from the incentives and the bloodshed in favor of the religious convictions. Here, the relation signifies the same firm relation which ties the hearts of the staunch believers with the holy Prophet Muhammad and his honorable Ahl al-Bayt .

Among the first who elegized Imam al-Husayn was Bishr b. Hidhlam. It happened when Imam Ali Zayn al-Abidin, then the leader of the caravan of the survivors of the Karbala massacre, en route home, sent him on a mission to hasten toward the city and inform the inhabitants of Medina of the martyrdom of Imam al-Husayn. Wearing a black turban and pulling his horse with a piece of black rope, he entered the city and imparted to them the ominous news of the martyrdom of Imam al-Husayn. There he :composed an elegy of which the following lines are famous

,O Inhabitants of Yathrib! Why are you sitting still

,While [Imam] al-Husayn was martyred

.Hence I am shedding tears

,May God not take me away from those homes and their inhabitants

.While they have turned uninhabited, despite my desire

,The Martyr of Taff belongs to the Bani Hashim

t:٨

.Though his martyrdom causes Muslims to be ashamed

Elsewhere, it is reported that the first elegy on Imam al-Husayn was composed by :Bahil al-Jumhi, who expressed himself as follows

,Drowsy and drunkard are the Umayyads' eyes

.While the Taff incident never lets the friends sleep a wink

Ever since the Karbala tragedy, there have been innumerable poets who gained the grace of composing an elegy in praise of and in memory of Imam al-Husayn b. Ali, or the heartbreaking and woeful Karbala tragedy and its mournful consequences. Such a .line of devotional literature has never stopped and will never cease

The tradition of elegizing Imam al-Husayn and the Karbala tragedy has by no means been confined to the Arab or Arabic-speaking, poets; poets of other languages have .also made significant contributions as well

In the Urdu language, there is a long list of poets who gained fame and reputation for their elegies on Imam al-Husayn. Among them are Mir Babar Ali Anis (۱۸۰۱-۱۸۷۴), Mirza Salamat Ali Dabir (۱۸۰۳-۷۵), Muhammad Baqir, the founding father of Urdu journalism (d. ۱۸۵۷), Shams al-Ulama Mawlana Muhammad Husayn Azad Dihlawi (d. ۱۹۱۰), the

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poet Mawlana Hasan Raza Khan (d. A.H. ١٣٢۶/ ١٩٠٨) and the poet Faiz Ahmad Faiz (d. .(١٩٨۴

In Persian, a great host of poets are known for their poetry and elegies on Imam al-Husayn. Mulla Husayn Vaez Kashefi Sabsevari (d. A.H. ٩١٠/١۵٣٢) included many such .poems in his work Rawzat al-Shohada

Of Persian poets who elegized Imam al-Husayn, the most well-known is Muhtasham Kashani (d. A.H. ٩٩۶/١۵٨٨), who used to serve at the court of Shah Tahmasb the Safavid. Others in the same line include Abulmajd Majdud Sanayie (d. A.H. ١١٣١/١٧١٩), Adibulmamalek (d. A.H. ١٣٠٨), Mahmoud Khan Malek al-Shoara (d. A.H. ١٣١١), Safi Ali Shah (d. A.H. ١٣١۶/١٨٩٠), the author of Erfan al-Haq , Bahr al-Haqaeq , and Mizan al-Ma`refah , and Yaghmayie, a professor of Persian literature at Dar al-Fonoun College .in Tehran

In Turkish, quite a good number of great poets have composed poems in memoriam Imam al-Husayn b. Ali and the heartbreaking incidents of the Ashura tragedy. Among them, mention must be made of the following: Lameie (d. ١۵٣١), Hairati (d. ١۵٣۵), Fuzuli Baghdadi (d. ١۵۵۵), Abidi (d. ١۵٧٢), Safi (d. in the ١۶th century), Shamsi Pasha (d. ١۵٨٠), .(and Sabouhi (d. ١۶۴٧

In line with the above, English-speaking poets, whether Muslim, Christian, Hindu, etc., have also made significant

.contributions to produce elegies for Imam al-Husayn and the Karbala tragic incidents

It has been the grace of the Almighty to our friend and brother Dr. Muhammad-Reza Fakhr-Rohani, presently professor of English at the University of Qom, that he has anthologized a fine collection of such English poems in the present book, titled Ashura Poems in English. He showed interest and an inclination to have his book published in the series of the books published by, and with the emblem of, the Library of Imam al-Husayn's Sacred Sanctuary; the curatorial council of the Library consented to this request. With the publication of this book, we wish Dr. Fakhr-Rohani more success and graceful opportunities to render services to the Ahl al-Bayt and to throw light on .the afflictions they endured throughout history

Muhammad al-Hassoun

۱st Ramadan ۱۴۲۷/۲۵th September ۲۰۰۶

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PREFACE

The prime reason and motive for compiling the following anthology of devotional poems on Imam al-Husain is to record and mark my humblest degree of reverence and devotion to the unimaginably high status of Imam al-Husain, and then .to provide readers with a range of such poems so far composed in English

When my colleague Mr. Abdul-Hosseyn Tale'i suggested to me to embark on such a task, it hardly seemed practicable; however, it has been certainly by divine grace that I have been able to gradually come across such poems here and there and produce the first volume of such an anthology. Considering that this is my first endeavor to take a step toward collecting and anthologizing Ashura literature in English, I wish to request each and every esteemed reader to provide me with additional poems of the nature collected here. This is just to work out a further revised and enlarged edition. Surely anybody who contributes to this collection they .will receive the divine grace and will benefit from the favor of Imam al-Husain

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The poems are anthologized in this collection just as they appear on websites
.or in the sources from which they are taken

I would sincerely appreciate any comment, suggestion, contribution, or reminder. I can be reached at the following addresses: dr fakhr ۱۳۸۵@yahoo.com or P. .O. Box: ۳۷۱۸۵-۷۴۴, Qom, Iran

Qom, Iran

.Muhammad-Reza Fakhr-Rohani, Ph.D

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I am thankful to Allah Who provided me with this opportunity to carry out the present task as the least cultural service to those who have got to know, or learned to love, Imam al-Husain (May Divine grace and salaams be bestowed upon him). No doubt, it is a gratifying and blessed work which, I hope, will be recognized as a mark of my humblest service to the divine status of Imam al-Husain which is beyond conjecture. I simply hope to receive his graceful favor for .such a humble task

I am grateful to Mr. Abdul-Hoseyn Tale'i for his initial suggestion to compile such an anthology. Next, my sincere thanks go to Sheikh Ali al-Fatlawi, presently the Curator of the Library of Imam al-Husain's Sacred Sanctuary in Karbala for his permission to let us have the honor of indicating Imam al-Husain's Sanctuary as the publisher of the present volume. This will certainly remain an everlasting honor for all those who have been involved in producing this book. I cannot forget Sheikh Muhammad al-Hassoun for his kind and sincere help. Indeed, Sheikh Muhammad al-Hassoun's cooperation makes me indebted to him forever; he suggested to me to have this

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book published in the series of the publications of Imam al-Husain's Sacred Sanctuary. Also Sayyid Hashim al-Milani, the Curator of the Library of Imam 'Alī's .Sanctuary in Najaf deserves my sincere appreciation for this support

I express my sincere appreciation to Dr. Ali Afkhami and Dr. Ali-Muhammad Haghshenas-Lari, distinguished professor of linguistics at the University of Tehran, and his family for having read the final draft of the present volume and the .suggestions they made

My special thanks go to His Grace Archbishop Sebouh Sarkissian, Sheikh Muhammad Sadiq Muhammad al-Karbasi, the editor of the London-based Imam al-Husain Encyclopedia , Sheikh Muhammad Kalbasi, Dr. Ali-Reza Babazadeh, and Mr. Kamal al-.Sayyid

Among my university students, Mr. Hamed Akhyani deserves my profound and special appreciation. He has always expressed keen academic interest as well as devoutly religious fascination and rendered his substantial assistance while the present volume was in gestation. I am, and will always remain, appreciative of his effective and .invaluable cooperation and crucial help

Regarding office jobs, Mr. Gholam-Reza Yazdandoost, Mr. Muhammad-Hosseyn .Shahri, and Miss Minoo Jalali also helped me a lot

I cannot forget the assistance I received from my good friends in New Delhi in the summer of ۲۰۰۶. Among a long list of friends who proved cooperative, I ought to mention the following: Mr. Morteza Shafi'i-Shakib, Mr. Mohammad-Hossein Mozaffari, Dr. Syed Quayam Hussain, all at Iran Culture House in New Delhi, Mrs. M. ,Vijayalakshmi

Librarian of Sahitya Akademi(National Academy of Letters), New Delhi, Mr. Murad Ali Baig, Prof. Makarand Paranjape of Jawaharlal Nehru University, Mr. Mortaza Danesh Husaini and her eminent mother, Dr. Bilquis Fatimah Husaini of the University of Delhi, Dr. Nonica Datta, professor of history at the University of Delhi as well as at Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Dr. Shah Muhammad Waseem of Aligarh, Prof. Abdur Rahim Kidwai and Dr. Syed Faiz Zaidi both of Aligarh Muslim University. I am also grateful to Prof. Richard Parmentier of Brandeis University, and Dr. Tabish Khair of the University of Aarhus, Denmark, for contributing one of his poems to this collection. They helped me in many ways and made my short research trip to India as pleasant .and fruitful as possible. May God reward them all

Dr. Mahmoud Mahdavi-Damghani of Mashhad, Iran, Dr. Farideh Mahdavi-Damghani and her eminent father, Dr. Ahmad Mahdavi-Damghani (presently at Harvard University) showed great interest and encouraged me to go along with the project. I also thank my French friend Dr. Mouslim Fidahoussen and the famous Lebanese Christian literary figure, Dr. Georges Gordak, widely renowned for his scholarship on .the life of Imam 'Alī b. Abī Tālib, for their moral support

Last but not least, I offer my most heartfelt thanks to my wife for her patience and understanding and for creating a fitting environment for the accomplishment of .this task

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ABBREVIATIONS

A./rabic

(b., Arabic ibn , son (of

E./nglish

L./line

(Lit./eral(ly

Ll., lines

P./ersian

s.v., Latin sub verbo , under

Var./iant, various

t:۱۸

Permission (to fight) is given unto those upon whom war is made for they have been oppressed, and verily, to help them, God is Most Potent; Those who have been ”!expelled from their homes unjustly save that they say: “Our Lord is God

.THE HOLY QURAN, ٢٢ [AL-HAJJ]. ٣٩-۴٠

And say not of those who are slain in God’s cause, “They are dead”: nay, they are .alive, but you perceive it not

.THE HOLY QURAN, ٢ [AL-BAQARA]. ١۵۴

.God loves whoever loves [Imam] al-Husain

THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD

The place where [Imam] al-Husain is buried has been one of Paradise Gardens since .he was buried therein

IMAM JA‘FAR AL-SāDIQ

.Once God wishes to do a favor to someone, He makes them love [Imam] al-Husain

IMAM JA‘FAR AL-SāDIQ

t:١٩

In a distant age and climate the tragic scene of the death of Hussain will awaken the .sympathy of the coldest reader

,Edward Gibbon

The Decline and Fall o f the Roman Empire

The best lesson which we get from the tragedy of Karbala is that Husain and his followers were the rigid believers of God, they illustrated that numerical superiority does not count when it comes to truth and falsehood. The victory of Husain despite his .minority marvels me

,Thomas Carlyle

Hero and Hero-worship

t:٢٠

There is something quite strange yet intriguing with the name “Imam al-Husain”. One of the most charming and pleasing names, the name “Imam al-Husain” implies noble characteristics and most admirable qualities. Yet, it mysteriously inspires his adherents and admirers to carry out their most sincere duties and modes of servitude, simply for the sake of meeting his satisfaction. The compiler of the present .volume simply aspires to be regarded as one such person

Throughout history, the purest and noblest forms of art, literature, architecture, and so forth have been associated with either religion itself, or figures closely associated with God and/or religion. Hence, the most sincere feelings of devotion are crystallized in the form of poetry, regardless of the language used. The impact of Imam al-Husain on poets is highly evident in such languages as Arabic, Persian, Urdu, or Turkish, being the dominant languages of Muslim populations. Such poems reveal the extent and depth of the impression the Imam has since exerted on the culture of the language in question. By the same token, it is interesting to examine such

devotional poems in English. Indeed, such poems only express the poet's most .sincere feelings or reflections about the admirable figures in question

The bulk of ziarat(۱) texts, poems, prose pieces, laments, sermons, and tazia (Shiite version of passion play)(۲) scripts devoted to the Ashura tragedy collectively make up what can generally be called Ashura literature.(۳) Granted that such forms of Ashura literature necessitate redefinition of "literature proper" simply to cover literary and linguistic manifestations of the whole event, Ashura literature is by no means .limited to the Islamic era, beginning specifically from the very day of Ashura

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According to The Oxford English Dictionary (۲nd ed., ۲۰ vols [۱۹۸۹], s.v. "ziarat"), the - -۱ word "ziarat" is defined as "A Muslim place of pilgrimage, a shrine; a pilgrimage to such a place." This is one sense of the word "ziarat" as used in Arabic and Persian. Although not recorded in The Oxford English Dictionary, there is still another sense of the word which concerns prescribed and often-recommended texts, of various lengths, to be read while paying such a visit. "Ziarat texts" deal with the second sense noted here; they signify a religious meeting, far beyond the bounds of time and place, .with a mostly monologue type of talking

Shorter Oxford English Dictionary (۵th ed., ۲ vols [۲۰۰۲]) defines it in this way: "A - -۲ play commemorating the suffering and death of Husain, performed esp. on the ".anniversary of the event each year

In Arabic, it is called Adab al-Taff (lit. Karbalā Literature). Taff is another - -۳ designation of Karbalā. See, for example, J. Shubbar, Adab al-Taff, ۱۰ vols (Beirut: Dar al-Murtada, ۱۴۰۹ AH/۱۹۸۸). In Persian, the following works must be mentioned as examples: H. Gool-Muhammadi, ed., Ashura va She're Farsi [Ashura and Persian Poetry] (Tehran: Atlas, ۱۳۶۶ Sh/ ۱۹۸۵) and M.-A. Mojāhedi, Shokuh-e She'r-e Āshurā .(dar Zabān-e Fārsi (Qom: Shahid Mahallāti Institute, ۱۳۷۹ Sh/۱۹۹۹

Ashura literature dates back to the pre-Islamic period. According to an account related in Mafātīh al- Jinān ,(١) following the Safwān prayer, Imam Ja'far al-Sādiq remarks, through the chain of authorities indicated therein, that the text of the Ashura Ziarat was initially composed and issued by the Almighty. (Supposing that there had not been any praise for Imam al-Husain except the very account indicated here, this single account itself proves well indicative of the magnificence and significance of the Ashura incident and the unique personality of Imam al-Husain.) If such an authoritative text as the Ashura Ziarat could provisionally be put aside on the basis of the fact that its source of production was God the Almighty, the first human-produced work in the rest of the common heritage of Ashura literature dates back at least to the very first elegy which the Christian apostle Zachariah composed on the Ashura (incident(٢)-(٣

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١- Mafātīh al-Jinān is a collection of prayers for recitation, non-obligatory, - recommended rituals, and so forth anthologized by the late Sheikh Abbas Qommi. Although the explanations were originally phrased in Persian, the whole text later on appeared in Arabic and Urdu translations. Various editions and selections of the book .are widely available

٢- See the annotated English translation of the Holy Quran produced by S.V. Mir - Ahmed Ali (١st US ed., Elmhurst, NY: Tahrike Tarsile Qur'an, ١٩٨٨), s.v. the Quranic mysterious letters KĀF, HĀ, YĀ, 'AYN, SĀD in the first verse of the Sura Maryam (viz. .Mary), p.٢۴٢f, ١٣٠٩

٣- Viewed from this broad perspective, one may come up with a classificatory - scheme of Ashura literature. That is, it may be classified as a) pre-Islamic vs. b) post-Islamic accounts of lament on Imam al-Husain. While of the former there are just some reports in certain hadith-based exegeses (tafsīrs) of the Holy Quran, the latter can (conveniently and irrespective of the language used) be subdivided into poetic prose pieces, lectures and sermons, and poems, all focusing on the captivating personality of Imam al-Husain, his speeches, addresses, the poems (ascribed to him), and particularly the hardships he and his matchless adherents endured. As such,

Ashura literature proves to be one of the most interesting literary genres not only far beyond the frontiers of Islam but signifying a linking thread between (at least) such Abrahamic religions as Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Unfortunately, such an archetypal and symbolic tragedy seems not to have received the due attention it deserves in most Western or Islamic literary circles. Needless to say, Ashura literature cannot logically be restricted to any predetermined languages and genres, nor to the faith and denomination of anyone who composes such a devotional piece of literature.

several centuries ahead of its taking place. (There are some outstanding and high-ranking Shiite ulema [clerics] who have written various accounts(۱) of the similarities observable between the attributes and fates of the Christian apostle John [Arabic Yahyā] and Imam al-Husain.) Such literary forms are entirely devoted to revealing the purest and noblest kinds of sincere feelings of their composers as well as serving as accounts of the hardships and afflictions Imam al-Husain's front suffered and endured in the Ashura tragedy.(۲) In the Islamic period, since the Ashura tragedy onward, almost every devout belletrist, author, or researcher, however amateur or proficient, has produced (at least) a work, literary or scholarly, chiefly to mark his or her reverence and tremendous respect for

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۱- - See, for example, J. Shūshtarī, Dam' al-'ayn 'alā Khasā'is al-Husain, Persian title [Ashk-e Ravān bar Amir-e Kāravān], trans. Sayyed Muhammad Hosseyn Shahrestani (first lithographic ed., ۱۳۱۳ AH/۱۸۹۵; ۹th ed., Qom: Dar al-Ketab, ۱۳۸۱ Sh/۲۰۰۲), pp. ۴۳۹-۴۴۳, and pp. ۴۲۳-۴۵۰, for Imam al-Husain's similarities with other prophets and apostles; cf. the Arabic original under the title of Al-Khasā'is al-Husainīyya: Khasā'is al-Husain wa Mazāyā al-Mazlūm, ed. Sayyed Ja'far Bāqir al-Husainī (Qom: Anwār al-Hudā, ۱۴۲۵ AH/ ۲۰۰۴), pp. ۴۹۶-۵۰۳, on the similarities between Imam al-Husain and the Apostle John; the entire Chapter ۱۰, pp. ۴۷۵-۵۱۵, is concerned with the similarities between Imam al-Husain and other prophets and apostles.

۲- - Undoubtedly, the earliest piece of Ashura lament (viz. nawha) was produced by Lady Zaynab, Imam al-Husain's sister, beside the Imam's decapitated body on the Karbala battlefield of Ashura.

Imam al-Husain. Such works are by no means limited to Shiite literary figures; rather, quite a lot of Sunnite, even Christian, Jewish, and Hindu figures have shown and continue to show their respect and reverence by composing such pieces.(۱) Truly amazing is the fact that Ashura literature transgresses beyond all bounds of religion, political leaning, or language in that almost nothing can stand on a par with it as so penetrating and moving and, at the same time, smoothing. The more a person reads or writes about it, the more eager they feel to go on with it. It makes one ponder, feel aflame, produce a work,(۲) feel satisfied for having done his or her duty, and then find it far from expressing their true feelings and pathos they experience, let alone to reflect the smallest degree of the depth and wide horizons of the event! In a nutshell, .fatigue does not make sense here for this is a true instance of a labor of love

Ashura literature in its entirety is not, and should by no means, be restricted to the main languages of the Muslim population. Such literature has been either translated into major European languages or produced directly in such languages as

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See, for example, A. Bara, Al-Husain fī al-Fikr al-Masiīhi (۲nd ed., Beirut, ۱۹۷۹; Qum: - -۱ Fadak, ۱۴۲۶ AH/۲۰۰۵); A. al-Nāblusī, Alāqah al-Masīhīyyīn bi Ahl Bayt al-Nabīyy (Beirut: Dār al-Hādī, ۱۴۲۲ AH/۲۰۰۱). Here mention must be made of Archbishop Sebouh Sarkissian's work "The Events of Karbala: A Survey of Some Classical Sources: al-Ya'qubi, al-Tabari, and al-Mas'udi" (Unpublished thesis, University of Birmingham, ۱۹۸۱), and Kamāl al-Sayyid, Boules Salāmah: Shā'ir al-Ghadīr wa Karbala fī al-Zaman al-Akhir (Beirut: Dar al-Ghadir, ۱۴۲۵ AH/۲۰۰۴). Part of the last work (pp. ۴۶-۷۶) focuses on the Ashura incident as mirrored in the poems of Boules Salamah, a famous .Lebanese Christian poet

This encompasses any type of work colored and minted with a sincere sense of - -۲ devotion, be it drawing an artistic work, e.g. the contemporary Iranian painter .[Maestro Farshchiyan's famous painting 'Asr-e 'Ashūrā [The Ashura Afternoon

English, French, and so forth. As long as Ashura is remembered and devoutly commemorated, its literature will remain and survive, for Ashura has been an incident far beyond the bounds and confines of the precise day of Ashura, the plain of Karbala, and the religion of Islam. It will remain imbued with invaluable and perennial lessons, .moral, religious, and educational for all humanity

Ashura will always remain a never-ending lesson. It has since vociferated the voice of the perennial battle between right and wrong, darkness and light, and it continues to mark the oppression of pure religious thought and noble human characters. In this way, it reverberates the voice of religious nobility as exemplified and crystallized in the Ashura battle. Throughout the ages, Imam al-Husain, the mourning ceremonies held for him, and even going on pilgrimage to humbly pay visitation to his sacred tomb and sanctuary, and even paying a visit to those who have been on pilgrimage to Karbala, have not been altogether devoid of political implications for those who have realized the inherent political force behind the belief in the personality of Imam al-Husain as well as the spiritual and religious rewards and virtues recorded in the authoritative and canonical hadith texts.(۱) To these, one

t:۲۶

۱- The bulk of hadith literature in this regard is legion and amazingly abundant, - thought-provoking, and awe-inspiring. See, for example, the hadiths recorded in such texts as Ja'far b. Muhammad b. Qūlawayh al-Qummī, Kāmil al-Zīyārāt, ed. 'Abdul Husain al-Amīnī ([lithographic ed.] Najaf: al-Murtadawīyya, ۱۳۵۶ AH/۱۹۳۷), 'Abdul Husain al-Amīnī, 'Adab al-Zā'ir Liman Yamamm al-Hā'ir, ed. Najāh Jābir Salmān alHusainī ([orig. lithographic ed.] Najaf, ۱۳۶۲ Ah/۱۹۴۳; repr. Beirut: al-Balagh, ۱۴۲۴ AH/۲۰۰۳); Muhammad b. 'Alī b. al-Hasan al-'Alawī al-Shajarī, Fadl Ziyārat al-Husain 'Alayh al-Salām , ed. Sayyed Ahmad al-Husainī (Qom: Ayatollah Mar'ashī Public Library, ۱۴۰۳ AH/۱۹۸۲) which contains eighty-nine hadiths on this topic.

must add the innumerable biographies(١), nawha s (viz. laments), marthiya s (viz. elegies), and dramas,(٢) produced in Arabic, Persian, Turkish, and Urdu, to mention (just a few.(٣

The present book is by no means the first and last volume collected in this field. Contrary to an initial anticipation, it seems that Ashura literature in English will occupy at least five volumes of books. Hence, readers and

t:٢٧

١- A huge number of volumes of bibliographies have been compiled on the biographies of Imam al-Husain. The bulk of biographical accounts is legion and incalculable. Certainly no other figure can match Imam al-Husain as the subject of so many books, treatises, theses, dissertations, and biographical accounts, short or long, published or unpublished, in history. Excluding manuscripts and essays on his biography, compiling a bibliography of the published books dealing with the life of Imam al-Husain would turn into a voluminous work. There is a short list of ١٠٣ important Arabic books on Imam al-Husain in M.-A. al-Amīnī al-Najafī's thirty-two page Introduction to Maqtal al-Imam al-Husain of M.-R. al-Tabasī al-Najafī (Qom: Muhibbin, ١٣٨٢ Sh/ ٢٠٠٣), pp. ٩-٢٠. See also the bibliographies of such short accounts as M. T. al-Samāwi, Ibsār al-'ayn fī Ansār al-Husain, rev. ed., ed. A. J. al-Hasanī (Beirut: al-Balāgh, ١٤٢٤ AH/٢٠٠٣), and M.-B. Pour-Amini, Chehrehā dar Hemāse-ye Karbalā (Qom, Iran: Boustān-e Ketāb, ١٣٨٢ Sh/ ٢٠٠٣). The Persian books and monographs on the subject are almost innumerable. The present author has not had access to a list of such biographies and research monographs written particularly in English; however, it is not illogical to guess that quite a great number of such accounts must have been .produced in Muslim countries where English is the lingua franca

٢- For instance, A. Al-Sharqawi, Husain the Martyr: A Play in Six Scenes, trans. A. .(Abdul-Razzak (Chicago, Ill.: The Open School, ١٩٩٧

٣- [٣] See, for instance, the articles "Anīs", "Marthiya", and "Muhtasham-i Kāshānī" in The Encyclopaedia of Islam, new edition (Leiden: E. J. Brill, ١٩۶٠-). I should here like to mention a research project on the Turkish heritage of Ashura literature, currently

under development by Dr. Amir al-Khaledi at the University of Kufa in Najaf, Iraq .((personal communication

critics are requested to contribute to this collection by providing the compiler with .poems not included in the large corpus so far collected

An attempt has been made to facilitate the readers' tasks. Where a person, a concept, a term, or an event is mentioned in a poem, the reader may refer to the endnote indicated, geared to its proper line number. This is for the reader's ease of reference to the lines in which they appear. Just after each poem, there are some explanations to save the readers' time, and to provide them with some basic .information to comprehend the fragment(s) in question

The present introductory essay can hardly be regarded as a true introduction to a poetic collection on Ashura. It merely serves as a text by way of introduction. And, no doubt, any introduction to the life and afflictions of Imam al-Husain will prove far from adequate in respect of the greatest tragic incident in the world.(۱) After all, who dares, or may even claim, to adequately describe the life of Imam al-Husain whom God honored with martyrdom?(۲) Any attempt to describe such a great incident would .be like an ant's description of the Prophet Solomon's kingdom

t:۲۸

۱- - Take note of the following phrase quoted from the Ashura Ziarat "musībatan mā 'a'zamuhā wa 'a'zama razīyyatuhā fī'l-islām wa fī jamī' al-samāwāt wa'l-ard" [an .[agony for which there is nothing comparable in Islam and even in the whole world

۲- - - Consider the fragment of the 'Arba'īn Ziarat which reads "akramtahū bi al-shahāda" [you, viz. God, respected and honored him [Imam al-Husain] with .[martyrdom

The present introductory discourse ends with a fragment of a poem by the Iranian poet Seyyed Ali Musavi-Garmarudi: "Here the word ends/ Where I reach an end/ At you no end bends".

May God the Almighty consider and accept the present humble attempt.

Amen!

t:۲۹

HARI KUMAR: ASHURA

.The chain whips awaken
a hundred eyes on their backs

Red tears trail the streets

.to the gold-domed tomb of Husain

A golden spider with legs of blood.

.Wails shake the sky the minaret props

,But today, for every lash for Husain

٭.a lash will tear for a warded son

٭http://www.harismind.com/poems.html Ashura

t:۳۱

:T. D. CHATTANI

VALE OF SORROW

Through the Vale of sorrow does history trace

Two matchless martyrs our Prophet's pets

Who left their hearths with Islamic grace

.In hunger and thirst their duty to face

Severed from home, exhausted on the field

Opposed by enemies who had Satan's shield

They gave their lives that others be freed

.From falsehood, tyranny and a Kafir's creed

Most precious blood flowed from their veins

Battlefield of Karbala has still those stains

From our hearts should rush rivers of blood

*! .Renewing our faith with this vital flood

Khurshed, ed., Imam Husain , ۲nd ed., p. ۱۵۷*

."L. ۸ "Kafir" refers to "infidel, unbeliever, or pagen

t:۳۲

AMEEN KHORASANEE: HUSAIN OF KERBALA

,Men weep for you today in many lands
,And on their breasts in bitter anguish beat
And in sad, mournful tunes, the tales repeat of how you
.lost your family upon the sands
You nobly spurned the tyrant's base demands and chose
—,Death to prevent your soul's defeat
—Became a martyr with unflinching feet
.For these well may one weep who understands
,This sorrow at your death, despite the years is still as fresh
Which Time has failed to quell.
In every heart this day new pain appears
.And of your sufferings men each other tell
They see a vision through slow falling tears of that lone
.Battle where athirst you fell*

* .Lalljee, The Martyrdom of Imam Husain , p. ۶۰

t:۳۳

SAROJINI NAIDU:THE NIGHT OF MARTYRDOM

Blackrobed, barefooted, with dim eyes that rain
Wild tears in memory of thy woeful plight,
And hands that in blind, rhythmic anguish smite
Their bloodstained bosoms to sad refrain
From the old haunting legion of thy pain,
Thy votaries mourn thee through the tragic night
With mystic dirge and melancholy rite,
Crying to thee — Husain! Husain!
Why do thy myriad lovers so lament?
Sweet saint, is not thy matchless martyrhood
The living banner and brave covenant
Of the high creed thy Prophet did proclaim,
Bequeathing for the world's beautitude
Th' enduring loveliness of Allah's name?*

* Naidu, The Feathers of the Dawn , p. ۶.

t:۳۴

SAROJINI NAIDU: THE IMAM BARA

I

,Out of the somber shadow

,Over the sunlit grass

Slow in a sad procession

The shadowy pageants pass

Mournful, majestic, and solemn,

,Stricken and pale and dumb

Crowned in their peerless anguish

.The sacred martyrs come

Hark, from the brooding silence

Breaks the wild cry of pain

Wrung from the heart of the ages

!Ali! Hassan! Hussain

II

,Come from this tomb of shadows

Come from this tragic shrine

That throbs with the deathless sorrow

.Of a long-dead martyr line

Love! Let the living sunlight

Kindle your splendid eyes

Ablaze with the steadfast triumph

Of the spirit that never dies.

t:۳۵

So may the hope of new ages

Comfort the mystic pain

That cries from the ancient silence

*!Ali! Hassan! Hussain

Imam Bara. "Imambara, Imaumbara, Eemaumberra = A building maintained by the Shia Muslims for the express purpose of celebrating the Muhurrum ceremonies, to which they bring their Tazias and Taboots." in Lewis, Sahibs, Nabobs, and Boxwallahs: .A Dictionary of the Words of Anglo-India , Delhi: Oxford University Press, ۱۹۹۱

.Naidu, The Sceptred Flute: Songs of India , pp. ۱۵۲-۱۵۳ *

t:۳۶

W.C.TAILOR, AN ODE

Tell me friends what shall you say
On the awful Judgment Day
When Mohammad asks you where
?Are those trusted to you care
Dearer than a thousand lives?
Bound by many a fastening chain
,Some in dungeons dark remain
On Kerbala's barren strand
.Others lie, a reaking band
Torn with wounds and stain'd with mud
.Weltering in their own heart's blood
When before the Judgment seat
,You the Holy Prophet meet
He shall ask. If thus you show
The gratitude you justly owe,
For all the benefits bestow'd
*.By whom whose bounty freely flow'd

.Khurshed, ed., Imam Husain, ٢nd ed., p. ١٥٨ *

ANONYMOUS: VISION OF KERBALA

Here's the tale of my nightly trance
The Vision of Karbala in a deathly dance
,When a Martyr great faced the lance
,Of shameful Shimr for Islam to enhance
No war of weapons or battles' sound
,Equals this tragedy all world round
No hero hooked to holiness stood
.With such head held high without shelter or food
His trumpet spake not to an armed throng
But to seventy-two saints, the celestial strong
They all sang their heavenly song
.Giving their all to avenge a wrong
Satanic sceptres arranged with awful eye
This orgy of blood without a sigh
While our Sovereign Lord was passing by
.In scorching sand to answer people's cry
For Islam's unity he surrendered his head
With his darling children he nobly fed
The starving Ummat on its death-bed

Because through sacrifice are nations made!* ۲۰

* .Khurshed, ed., Imam Husain, ۲nd ed., p. ۱۵۶

t:۳۸

L. ۴. “Shimr”, full name “Shimr b. Dhī al-Jawshan”, was the most notorious figure in the Ashura incident. His real name was Shurahbīl b. ‘Amr b. Mu‘āwīyyah. He symbolizes cruelty and atrocity because he was reportedly the person who decapitated Imam al-Husain. He instigated and dispatched his men to attack and plunder the tents on .Imam al-Husain’s front

L. ۱۰. Although “seventy-two saints” refers to the widely-accepted number of martyrs of the Ashura battle; however, the number of martyrs listed inside Imam al-Husain’s .(sacred shrine amounts to some one-hundred martyrs (personal observation

L. ۱۹. “Ummat”, var. umma , means “The Muslim community

t:۳۹

H. WELLS: IMAM HUSAIN

Pitched upon the scorching desert,
The tent of Husain lay,
Encompassed round with Satan's hounds
Upon that black sad day.
They numbered less than eighty strong,
Women and children too,
While Yazid's thousands stood around,
Awaiting the fiend's might.
Driven away from the cooling stream,
His children waiting for water.
Awaiting with patience extremely sublime
Like sheep for the butcher's slaughter.
Oh! How valiantly fought that pitiful few,
Against Yazid's wild murderers,
Fought with a courage unequalled in Time
Fought with a fierceness that was surely Divine.
The earth quaked and trembled as noon drew near.
But still the survivors knew no fear
But fewer grew that pitiful band,

For Islam, God, and Husain they stand.

,At last, all were dead, the devil had won

,Blood red sank down the merciless sun

,Trampled and torn lay the gallant Husain

t:۴۰

*.For Islam, God, and the faithful were slain

.Khurshed, ed., Imam Husain, ۲nd ed., pp. ۱۴۱-۱۴۲ *

t:۴۱

TABISH KHAIR: POEM FROM OUTSIDE A MUHARRAM PROCESSION

The clash of arms, the clasp of armour

:(Ya Hassan, Ya Hussain)

.This is not sorrow, this is something else

This is defeat

That's more than victory, this is

The past that's passed by father to son

,As a trinket heirloom without price

.This is the inheritance of pain

There they whirl, bleeding, bleeding

(Ya Hassan, Ya Hussain)

From wounds inflicted on other bodies

.And in another century

This is not war, this is women wailing

After the battle is over, after

The head is severed, mitred on a lance.

This is the knowledge of death

Passed on from mother to daughter

.(Ya Hassan, Ya Hussain)

This is not religion, this

Is the exchange of unwrapped ۲۰

t:۴۲

Presents. This is a young boy feeling
With his father's heart, this is
A pony-tailed girl speaking
.With the voice of her mother
This is not anger, not even passion:
(Ya Hassan, Ya Hussain)
.This is dancing with the wound of time
*.This is my studied failure to feel

.Khair, Where Parallel Lines Meet, pp. ۹-۱۰ *

L. ۲. " Ya", an Arabic vocative or attention-getter, almost equivalent to English O, Oh, or Lo. Imam al- Hassan, here mentioned as Hassan, was Imam al- Hussain's elder .brother

t:۴۳

ANONYMOUS: ON THE MORN OF MUHARRAM

Wake up my friends; for the morn of
Qiama has arrived
It is the month of Muharram
The crescent of grief has appeared
Muharram is the month of tears
The month of mourning has arrived
Muharram is the month of blood
Bodies are shredded
And the desert is a garden of blood
The month of
The crescent of grief has appeared
mourning has arrived
The creation is sad and in mourning
:It is the month
When Husain was martyred
The crescent of grief has appeared
When the eyes of 'Ali shed blood
Husain sacrificed for thee path of Islam
The month of mourning has arrived
His head is on the spear
The crescent of grief has appeared
His body is on the ground
The arms of 'Abbas were
The month of mourning has arrived

cut in this month

The three-edged arrow settled in the

۲۵ parched throat of little Asghar

t:۴۴

The crescent of grief has appeared

The month of mourning has arrived

Zainab will hug the dust of thee dungeon

in this month

Thee innocent face of Sakina will be Bruised in this month

The crescent of grief has appeared

٭.The month of mourning has arrived

http://www.dartabligh.org/months/muharram/۸۳.asp ٭

.L. ۲. "Qiama" (correct form qiāmah) means the Resurrection Day

.L. ۱۵. "'Ali" refers to Imam 'Alī, the first Infallible Imam

L. ۲۳. "'Abbas" refers to 'Abbās b. 'Alī, Imam Husain's step-brother, who was martyred .at the Karbala Battle on Ashura

.L. ۲۵. "Asghar" refers to 'Alī al-Asghar, Imam Husain's six month baby

.L. ۲۸. "Zainab" was Imam Husain's sister

.L. ۲۹. "Sakina" was Imam Husain's beloved daughter

t:۴۵

FARAH YEGANEH: A SHAPED ELEGY FOR KARBALA

?Where do you reside now

?Where you reside

?Where you

?Where

Where rainbows — Where have the rainbows perished to?

?perished

?Where rainbows

?Where

?Why does the city look so dark

Why — Why city dark?

?dark

?Why

.I've lost the orange and the violet of the rainbow

.Orange and violet of rainbow

.Lost rainbow

?Lost. What should be done with the silent confusion

?What with silent confusion

?With silent confusion

— What?

.I used to stand under the big tall tree

.Stand under big tall tree

.Stand under tree

.Stand

Wonder at magic of .colors

And wonder at the magic of the colors.

.Magic of colors

t:۴۶

Magic.

What have they done to the echoes?
What done to echoes?
What to echoes?
What?
Have they eventually dissolved in nothingness?
Eventually dissolved in nothingness?
Dissolved in nothingness?
Nothingness?*

*Ms. Farah Yeganeh herself contributed this poem to this volume.

t:۴۷

ETHEL M. POPE: TRAGEDY OF MOHARRAM

Gold moonbeam shed their misty light

;O’er a saddened world

.To sound of deepest funeral dirge

,Islam’s banner is unfurled

With slow and measured step, ‘tis borne,

,Aloft amid the throng

The emblem of a mighty hand

,E’er raised to right a wrong

,In by-gone days its silken folds

Waved proudly in Iran;

,From Continent to Continent

.The Arab symbol ran

,Its path was marked by victory

;The triumph of the right

Till darkest Africa’s heathen hands,

.Were bathed in purest light

;That day of happiness is gone

,No more in ecstasy borne

;The banner heads a sobbing throng

Whose duty is to mourn.
The loss of him beloved by all
,A hero without stain
Whose noble sacrifice has made
The world ring with his name
With open hand he gave his all;
t:۴۸

His little children dear
Brothers, friends – helpless women too,
Cling to him in fear,
Unflinchingly, nor moved nor wept,
Secure in his just cause,
He nobly fought and nobly died,
To save Islam's great laws.
All the memory of martyrdom
A new the passions rise;
A bitter, sobbing, wailing cry,
Goes up unto the skies;
With each new year the latent grief,
Pent up, breaks out again,
And Heaven returns the impassioned cry,
Husain, Husain, Husain!*

* Khurshed, ed., Imam Husain, ۲nd ed., pp. ۱۵۳-۱۵۴

t:۴۹

JUSTICE A. D. RUSSEL: THE MARTYR OF KARBALA

,From age to age, on Virtue’s age

,Shall live the deathless story

,His loss remain the Martyr’s gain

;His shame the Martyr’s glory

Till truth shall lie, and Honor die,

.And time itself be hoary

,Arise Husain, arise“

;Chief of the Prophet’s seed

,Fling broad thy banner to the skies

And come with utmost speed,

Or ere the throne of the All-Wise

.”Usurped be by foul Yazid

,He’s donned his armour bright

;His father’s sword girt on

The sword of Ali, as the might

:Of the Destroyer’s own

And he is off ere morning light

,Across the desert wide and lone

!Now, Kufa, keep thy word“

To the good cause be true;

Yazid has sent a giant horde

;To march thy province through

,The hirelings of his father's hoard

”.Who grace or mercy never knew

They bore his god-like head aloft,

t:٥٠

.His mouth struck with their whips

,O mouth, that I have seen so oft“

,A-teem with angel quips

,In baby-kisses, warm and soft

Pressed to the Prophet’s lips!”

,O body, trampled, fouled, disdained

,Which charmed the gazer’s eye

The blood from out thy veins that drained

;Was heaven’s electuary

No horses hooves were ever stained

.In so divine a dye

,O barren plain of Karbala

With herb, nor yet with sod

!Be clad eternally; for ah

There, overwhelmed, down-trod,

The holy son of Fatima

*!Gave up his soul to God

.Khurshed, ed., Imam Husain, ۲nd ed., pp. ۱۳۶-۱۴۰ *

L. ۱۹. Kufa, or al-Kufa (Arabic al-Kūfa), is a town on western bank of the Euphrates. It is now quite close to al-Najaf. Al-Kufa served as a seat of Imam ‘Alī’s government, hence a refuge and center for the Shiites. Just prior to the Karbala incident, several of

its inhabitants wrote letters of invitation to Imam al-Husain; however, most of them betrayed him and participated in the unbalanced war against him in Karbala.

t:۵۱

MARIAM RIZVI: UNTITLED POEM

,PEACE, WITH SCEPTION AND HOPE, I SEEK

(CONGRUITY\'S SCOPE I KNOW IS BLEAK)

(TO MEND I CRAVE (RATHER THAN KILL

.TO SPILL BLOOD, ABHOR I WILL

Intend I do, no force to use (If sense in you I can infuse) But the rules,
supreme, of the divine faith

.Resolved I am, to defend till death

.Face your hostile moves I will

.Thought accord I covet, seek peace still

A holy war it means indeed If waged to
.crush the devil's creed

No rancour, `against you,' I hold

.But faith do cherish – as I told

Islam I will resolutely shield

Burnt will stand and never yield. Would welcome
(death (and make it tame

.Would rather die than live in shame

Your Prophet's scion I'm – you know

.At least some regard to his name show

His singular dictum is my creed:

.Universal good" I adore, indeed"

Ali, the paragon, the seraphic Imam

Champ of the faith, the shield of Islam

Inimitable, impeccable: I am his son

His peerless attributes I have won.

My heart is virtues' abode and nest

.Blessedness harbours in my breast

,Muhammad came in the kingdom of God

.as a messenger of peace as the master of creed

He influenced the world with Ali's help, and all the sons
.from his daughter's breed

,Fatima the lady of God's paradise

.Ali the warrior, the leader, the wise

,Hassan, the heir of eternal lore

Hussain, the martyr, the heaven's door.

,Call Ali in the trouble, Almighty says

.because in his presence the evil decays

,He's the lion of God, he's the sword of God

.and all his believers are one righteous squad

Islam's prosperity is the gift of Hussain, In the way of God,
.he sacrificed his clan

,He gave his head but not his grace

His martyrdom is a slap on the devils face.

The grandson of prophet ,decided to fight

to unveil the Satan, and bring him in light.

,The food was banned, the water was stopped

.but on his mind the triumph had topped

,Zainab was with her brother all the time

.and participated as much to demolish the crime

Her surety was Abbas, the holder of the flag,

Whose hand on the emblem is .the victory's tag

,The thirst was a menace, the hunger a threat

.an example for all the mankind was set

,But the righteuos fought, and died on the faith

and the right won, against the evils wraith. *

(Published on: Thursday, ۹ Muharam ۱۴۲۴ (۱۳ March ۲۰۰۳*

http://shianews.com/hi/articles/islam/۰۰۰۰۰۷۱.php

L. ۳۴. Hassan was the elder son of Imam ʻAlī and the second infallible imam. He was .the elder brother of Imam al-Husain

t:۵۴

L. ۴۸. Zainab, or Zaynab bint ‘Alī, was Imam al-Husain’s younger sister who accompanied Imam al-Husain from Medina to Karbala. She married her cousin ‘Abd Allah b. Ja‘far and had four sons and a daughter. Two of her sons, ‘Awn (var. Aun) and Muhammad, were martyred on Ashura in Karbala. She bravely acted as the leader of the survivors of the Karbala incident and eloquently acted as the disclosing voice of the Karbala revolt to reveal the real face and unjust character of Yazīd.

L. ۵۰. ‘Abbās (var. Abbas) b. ‘Alī was Imam al-Husain’s step-brother. He typifies and symbolizes bravery, religious zeal, chivalrous politeness, and absolute obedience toward Imam al-Husain.

t:۵۵

SYED AHMED ALI MOHANI: THE HERO OF KERBALA

,Many, many years ago

,On bloody field of Kerbala

,A noble hero faced his foe

.As champion of God’s Faith and Law

Ov’erhead there was a scorching sun,

,There were no shady trees

,Beneath a burning sandy plain

.With no refreshing breeze

;A scion of Hashim’s noble line

Of Heroism a model,

,Son of Ali, the Lion of God

.Grandson of God’s Apostle

,His comrades few but loyal and brave

,Some young and some advanced in age

The record of whose actions gave,

.To history its brightest page

,Of worldly comforts they had none

,No couch nor rosy bed

,To comfort their afflicted hearts

The Holy Word of God they read.
,Three days they every distress bore
,Deprived of drink and food
,The world does still wonder at
.Their unexampled fortitude
They fell around him one by one,
t:۵۶

Firm in their righteous ways,
And for their loyalty have won,
From friend and foe a world of praise.
His friends with loving grief he eyed,
Lying dead in sun’s scorching rays,
To justify his aim he tried,
To deal with foes in peaceful ways.
He brought in arms his baby son,
Asked them to give him water,
Said he, “The babe no harm has done,
To die of thirst or slaughter.”
Stones they threw and arrows shot,
Obedient to Yazid’s behest,
And in their fury spared not,
Ev’n life of baby at the breast!
A little before his enemies were,
For water sorely passed,
Relief he gave them then and there,
And could not see even foes distressed.
He humbly prayed and praised the Lord,

The Giver of Spiritual beauty,

And though midst danger never failed,

To do his sacred duty.

Wickedness can no further go,

Cruelty needs no greater proofs,

His sacred body, after death,

Was trampled under horses' hoofs!

Victory, though mean, they gained, but still,

No bounds knew their ire.

Orphans and widows they captives made,

t:٥٧

.And set their tents on fire

,The captives saw with choking grief

,And eyes dimmed with tears

,The tragic sight of Martyrs' heads

Uplifted on spears!*

. Lalljee, The Martyrdom of Imam Husain, pp. ۶۳-۶۵ *

L. ۲. "Kerbala" is a variant spelling of "Karbala" or "Karbela", correct Arabic ."pronunciation "Karbalā'", English spelling "Karbala

L. ۹. Hashim, or Hāshim b. 'Abd Manāf, was the great-grandfather of the Prophet .Muhammad

L. ۱۱. "The Lion of God" is an honorific title for Imam Ali signifying his bravery. Its . Arabic original is Asad Allah with a Persian equivalent as Shir-e Khoda

t:۵۸

It was peak of the mischief and virtues in chains;
Just laws were sacked with rules insane;
As the tyrants on the rise, and mass confused,
offered lust with lies, and faith abused.
Thus the signs indicated, and time dictated.
Some souls elevated as al-Husain (A.S.) navigated;
a seed of the Prophet (P) and the sight of his Parents (A.S.)
that time in deluge, he was ark so apparent.
In the Name of God, for the sake of Islam;
for the freedom of life and soul of Islam;
gave greatest sacrifice, but not his hands,
with the members of his kin and many of his friends.
Hur, Muslim and the friends those hearts so pure;
they offered their lives as shield and cure;
thus tyrants came forth from the curtain way old;
then peace was bought and lives were sold.
And daring in the manners were the two young brothers;
in the boldness of their moves were the teachings of a

mother

t:۵۹

Shone Aun and Muhammad with the valor known as
Haider (A.S.); Those children were slain not
the feeling of the mother.

With a message from his father was Qasim bin Hassan

A.S.); a radiant jewel of Islam was this)
;glowing young son

;but Qasim into pieces with a bride day old

.on the sand in heat it was savage and cold

Then the pride of the Hashims rode back from the
river; And
;the tyrants made sure that he did not deliver

;they cut off his arms, but spirit was set

.till an arrow hit the bag, only eyes got wet

;Fell Abbas (A.S.) from the horse, with no hands for resort

then al-Husain (A.S.) rushed to shore for a brother's end resort;

;those children who waited with the patience were told

.and thirst in the camp was three days old

;Soon Akbar cam down with spear in his chest

;which a father had to pull so severe was the test

He was image of the Prophet (P), and the life of al-
H u s a i n
(A.S.); He

(A.S) was vision of a mother and the eyes of al-Husain.

t:۶۰

,Now the Leader was alone as he called for the help

!then a baby fell down; a response from the crib

,This thirsty, pure, infant was a son of Imam

Who, acknowledged his father and the call of Imam.

,Thus al-Husain (A.S.) brought him for some water in the field

;and showed them baby's dried lips and appealed

,but the six months old got an arrow so thick

.that turned him over and tore his neck

Ali Asghar went to sleep, with his father and no fear;

with the cradle on the fire, ;and their head on spear

,and the mother's empty hand, with the tear dried eyes

.who looked for the baby to sing lullabies

;And a sister by the camp saw the horror of this trip

as a knife tore the neck, where the Prophet (P) put his lips;

Earth in grief, roared heavens and ,mourned

.Sand turned red when al-Husain (A.S.) was torn

,And a child full of tears with her tiny bleeding ears

;bruises on her face and her thirst so severe

She ran for her father who laid beheaded,

;and cried for the uncle for help she needed

;Syeda Zainab (A.S.) looked for her in the sadness of that night

t:۶۱

;did inquire every soul in the land of the plight

;but Sakina was sleeping on the chest of a body

with the love of the father, from the fragrance of his boy.

;Then the camp pushed down, while flames went up

;little children rushed out, as their dresses lit up

;it was night full of cries and the innocent quests

.shattered were the dreams and broken were the nests

All defenses laid to rest, after trials and the tests;

left to face, one Imam, ,even history would detest

;who fainted with the illness faced torture and torment

.a Master of the pious and devotees' ornament

;Lashes on his back heavy chains on Imam

but ladies were the prisoners, was the wound of Imam;

No chador for them ;but their rope tied arms

.and grief soared high from Kufa to Shaam

;But, the daughter of Ali (A.S.) challenged, miseries with the messages

;with the families in bazaars, and deadly courts of savages

With the depth of the patience and the Zenith of Bravery;

Braver Islam was rescued for ever from the ⁕.slavery

⁕ http://al-islam.org/history/history/marsiyya.html

L. ۶. “A.S.” is the abbreviated form of an originally Arabic honorific and prayer-like sentence. “‘Alayhi al-Salām” for males, or “‘Alayha al-Salām” for females are basic forms used to express one’s reverence and high respect for the dignitaries mentioned. Although widely-used in Islamic, particularly Shiite, devotional and religious texts produced in English, the abbreviation “A.S.” has not been recorded in .English dictionaries

.L. ۱۳. For Hurr, see note to L. ۱۸۱ above

.L. ۱۹. Aun and Muhammad are two sons of Lady Zaynab who was martyred in Karbala

.L. ۱۹. “Haider” is a title of Imam ‘Alī

L. ۲۱. Qāsim was son of Imam al-Hasan, Imam al-Husain’s elder brother. Qāsim .fought the enemy and was martyred in defense of his uncle, viz. Imam al-Husain

L. ۲۵. “[T]he Hashims” refers to the Hāshimids present at Karbala, viz. Imam al-Husain .and those of the Hāshimid dynasty

L. ۲۹. ‘Abbās (var. Abbas) b. ‘Alī was Imam al-Husain’s step-brother. He typifies and symbolizes bravery, religious zeal, politeness, and entire obedience toward Imam al-.Husain

t:۶۳

L. ۳۳. “Akbar”, lit. “elder”, is a title of ‘Alī b. al-Husain, the elder brother of the fourth Infallible Imam. Akbar is used here as a shortened form. On Ashura, he was the first .of the Hāshimids who went to the battlefield, fought the enemy, and was martyred

L. ۴۵. Ali Asghar, Arabic title ‘Alī al-Asghar, is ‘Alī b. al-Husain. [Asghar means the youngest.] When Imam al-Husain lost all his companions, he got back to the tents and found him suffering from intense thirst. To prevent his baby from dying of thirst, Imam al-Husain brought him to the enemy so as to get him some water. Imam al-Husain requested some water from the enemy soldiers to save him from certain death, but a wicked and cruel soldier shot an arrow and slew the baby in the Imam’s .arms

L. ۵۷. Syeda Zainab. “Syeda” (lit. Lady, Miss, or Mrs.) is the feminine form of “Syed”, itself the Indian-Subcontinent English variant form of “sayyid” which means Mr. or Sir. Regarding Zainab, or Zaynab bint ‘Alī, she was Imam al-Husain’s younger sister who accompanied Imam al-Husain from Medina to Karbala. (Bint means “daughter of”.) She married her cousin ‘Abd Allah b. Ja‘far and had four sons and a daughter. Two of her sons, ‘Awn (var. Aun) and Muhammad, were martyred in Karbala on Ashura. She bravely acted as the leader of the survivors of the Karbala incident and eloquently acted as the disclosing voice of the Karbala revolt to disclose the real face and unjust .character of Yazīd

t:۶۴

.L. ۵۹. Sakina (Sakīna bint al-Husain), was Imam al-Husain's daughter

L.۷۱. The word "chador" symbolizes formal and religious covering for women and girls when they get out. Already a loan word in English, it in signifies worrenls high social .status in Middle Eatern Muslim communities

L. ۷۲. Kufa to Shaam. Kufa, or al-Kufa (Arabic al-Kūfa), is a town on the western bank of the Euphrates. It is now quite close to al-Najaf. Al-Kufa served as a seat of Imam 'Alī's government, hence a refuge and center for the Shiites. Just prior to the Karbala incident, several of its inhabitants wrote letters, inviting Imam al-Husain to move there; however, most of them betrayed him and participated in the unbalanced war .against him in Karbala

L. ۷۲. "Shaam", or "al-Shām" refers to the Levant that is a region presently comprising Syria, and the neighboring parts of Lebanon, Palestine, and Jordan. It specifically refers to Damascus, the capital and seat of the Umayyad dynasty. In Shiite culture, it implies the hardest and most unbearable phase of captivity for the survivors of the .Karbala incident

t:۶۵

A. K. ESMAIL: THE CONQUEROR OF KERBALA

The tremendous surge from mid-deserts
Had just reached the brink
On its victorious onwards march
.And, there for a while it stopped
For a while it was touch and go
For a while it seemed
.Desert born desert contained
That was not to be
It was not so decreed
Muhammad’s own blood
.Was there to answer the call
At Kerbala the faith was reborn
And Husain’s martyred blood
Blossomed forth and
Lo, there was universal Islam.
To the last day—last minute
Shall shine the immortal deeds
Of Husain and his co-horts
The Faithful Few

Yes the Great one himself was on trial
The Last Prophet’s own blood
His darling and his heir
Husain himself had to fall
.Before the grand message spread
The mouths that had fed

t:۶۶

Bit the hands that held
The ungrateful serpent's bite
.That was a Prophet's reward
Bereft of gold, bereft of home
Bereft of food and water itself
But full of Muhammad's blood
Full of pluck full of faith
.The Courageous led on
Led on the last seventy-two
Seventy and two of the grand host
Spiritual ancestors of the like
Who from ages keep the faith alive
.Those that do not quit
Thrones are usurped, gold stolen
But not the thorny Crown
.That always rests on the brows of a rare Jesus
That was Husain's heritage
That went back of Christ
A heritage to stand like rock
To suffer to strive and to die

To die and cease to be

.So that Truth for ever be

They don’t die

The heroes of Kerbala

They who go through fiery furnaces and walk in the valley of shades

For the end they emerge

In shining armours radiating

.Light of truth for ever

In vain, in vain did Yazid foam

t:۶۷

In vain, did his armies storm
For the field was theirs
Who had their precious lives lain
.The conqueror of Kerbala was Husain
Here the unmatchable became invincible
Here the price for the perfect was paid
What father had conceived
.The brave son had fulfilled
Ye, fields of Kerbala
Stand us in need
Muslims arte again on trial
There is no Husain to lead.
Ya, Muhammad Mustapha
Grant us thy son’s spirit
Let Kerbala be our beacon
For we have only to repeat
The original deed is done
?Can we not just repeat
Yazids are yet all about
Within us and also without

His tribe does not die
Ye, waters of old lady Furat
Tell us how Husain fought
Tell us how he won
For again have we to win
And leave an example behind
That the message of Muhammad
The sacrifice of Husain
Shall not be in vain
Islam, Allah's noblest gift

*.Has to be earned again and again

.Lalljee, The Martyrdom of Imam Husain, pp. ۶۰-۶۳ *

L. ۱۹. “The Faithful Few” refers to Imam al-Husain’s companions who were relatively .much less than the number of the enemy’s army, which reportedly exceeded ۳۰,۰۰۰

.L. ۲۱. “The Last Prophet” refers to the Prophet Muhammad

L. ۵۳. Yazīd b. Mu`āwīyyah symolizes a very notorious and detestable figure. He was the cruel monarch of the Umayyad dynasty. Soon after his gaining power, he ordered his agent in Medina to gain Imam Husain’s alliance by force. As this was all in contradiction to the contents of the peace treaty signed by Mu‘āwīyyah and Imam Hassan, Imam al-Husain rightly refused to recognize Yazīd as a Muslim ruler. Hence, the Imam left Medina for Mecca in defiance to the unjust force exerted. As the people of al-Kufa had invited Imam al-Husain, he intended to go there. En route to and near Kufa, it was at Karbala where Yazīd’s agents and henchmen made Imam al-Husain stop. In fact, Yazīd ordered his forces to surrender, fight, and slay Imam al-Husain .and his companions therein

L. ۶۶. “Ya, Muhammad Mustapha”. “Ya” is an Arabic vocative or attention-getter, corresponding roughly to English O, Oh, or Lo. Mustapha, or Mustafa, ‘lit. Chosen, selected, preferred, favorite, is another laqab (designation or appellation) of the .Prophet Muhammad

t:۶۹

L. ٧٢. “Yazids” signifies those who are like Yazid in character. Although proper names are regarded as inherently definite, and non-count, in such secondary uses they quality as a set-, or category-denoting noun, hence they may take a plural marker.

L. ٧٥. Furat, or Furāt, [English Euphrates] is one of the two major rivers of Iraq where the city of Karbala is located on. It symbolizes the thirst Imam al-Husain and his companions endured as well as the battle occurred thereby at Karbala. According to numerous Islamic hadiths, it is regarded as a Paradise river imbued with virtues for whoever gets consecrated with it. Also recommended is to perform ghusl [i.e., washing the whole body in a prescribed way for religious or ritual purposes] with its water prior to performing ziarat, viz. pilgrimage, to Imam al-Husain’s sacred sanctuary. See Mohaddesī, Farhang-e Āshūrā , s.v. Furāt.

t:٧٠

SAYYED ALI MUSAVI GARMARUDI: THE TRACK OF BLOOD

– Trees I like them

;In your reverence they stand firm

,Likewise the water

.It's the dowry of your mother

It's your nobility
It's your blood brightened the honor,
.the horizon does mirror

,The dusk is that niche

.In the morn by martyrdom you did pray

In my mind thoughts about that valley flood

No, indeed not, a
The soil of which sucked your blood.
.vale so high I saw never

,It is you, only you, in a downfall dear

!Better from the vale itself hear

A sword which at your throat did ply

Turned Hussaini
Cut every thing into two under the sky.
whatever at your side

.While Yazidi the other side

!Now rocks and we

!Waters and we

Hills, canals, meadows, trees–

Some are Yazidis

.Else, they are Hussainis

t:٧١

Blood your neck irrigated

– Everything under the sky into two divided

Resided in every particle
Even the color

.In a dazzling garish carbuncle

.Else, not Hussaini nor does concur

!Your death, lo, what a gage

That to the death
Laughed at life and vilified its stage
.desired life to page

Your blood stood there

:and stood the Truth in its care

.One it is but a fare

Riveted the
Determination stood a security;
.world into its guarantee

Although false espouses the world

.Truth in canopy of your name brides the world

Peep into truth if to see you

The water in a
And the grass when it is to grow,
,drink when it's to flow

,The stone as challenges a throw

Into a sword when it cuts into two

,Or the lion when its roar the winds blow

Into the horizon which is bloody,

.In the smile of dusk which is ruddy

,In a stand

.In a demand

,You to be found in crevices

t:۷۲

To be smelled in roses
And the burning sun to be demanded,
The early morn to be commanded.
Should be opened heart of the night,
Seeds scattered the delight
And the winds carry your sight;
To be plucked from the bunches' height.
In God alone you to be seen,
Whosoever upon Truth if to lean,
Gory is he and his fingers beam
The glow of your blood and its sheen.
Eternity is the mirror
Hung before you for every viewer.
Alas, the sun, it is no better;
Hence, we wouldn't utter:
'It is your looks' glitter.'
In a cozy corner of history's conscience
Guarding the Truth stands he is vigilance.
In his smile tacts flow in mellifluence.
Strong, straight. Star striking–
Such the determinations are demonstrating

.The elevations if to be viewed by a human being

.Lo, infancy of reason astonishes in a daze confusing

-It is the lake of your own blood

A gateway of history where you have stood

Holding a jug of civilization for human good

To quench the caravan of mankind

.In a martyrdom pacing onward pressing the hind

t:۷۳

Your name disturbs the sleep under moon

,And deluges in water a Typhon

Lo, rests the law in your tone.

,To battle your determination only fools prone

.Your distinction is blood, only blood, blood alone

.O, you, not a divine but in divinity drown

Death is vile in your hold

As a fly a plaything among children's fold

And Yazid, a pretext.

,An excuser if to be told

As though a handkerchief before you unrolled

and you spited the filth of tyranny in its shroud

.and threw into the history's dustbin for other to scold

A huge blood sucker,

Not an

;entity but a lier

.Such was Yazid an idler

Sins personified in him

.And he to mankind a megrim

Robbery of name it is it to name him

.A man' however the sense he claim'

!O, you! O, Glorious victim

!Be upon you blessing

Not because thirsty you met martyrdom

But your enemy is of such a sum.

Your death red

,Broke Yazid's name into a shred

.And made the sense in the word tyranny dead

.Troops of words with barracks of description fled

t:۷۴

.Indeed, defeated is every human toil;
Battle with you is foul and toil
.Freed are the lions in your coil
.Your blood overflows the expression's soil
.Beyond the words is the flow for history's turmoil
Out of the track of time proceeds as a procession Royal
O, "Zabeehullah"! Divinity in your blood ;flows
.You the "Ismayeel" of God, in you oneness glows
,Abraham's vision" from a dream reality barrows"
,Karbala where your appointment wallows
Moharram the hour of love when the love loves.
And, lo, you are that sole person
.Carried forty days the pilgrim's season
"And We have complete it in ten"
;Ah, burns me the desire of comprehension
The incomplete pilgrimage pawned in suspension,
;Gained in your kiss at the dagger its perfection
.For the "BLACK STONE" virtual the best compensation
,Begins the love's history
,The red gains its entity
From your death–to life a treaty.

Letter commences from your blood

Religion found way the time you stood

As you fell the truth stood

.And took the Right a mould good

Weakened the tyranny's base in your blood's flood.   ١٣٠ Autumn of your death ,delivered eternal spring

t:٧٥

,Grass and trees in a pleasant ring

,And a blossom of red at every branch to swing

.Else, a dry fuel wood it is to the trees cling

No knot remained under your
.will's nail unopened
Secret of death you have opened.

;Wailing and weeping is the honor

.You ahead and it entails you for ever

Beyond the manliness you are far and further.

Oneness: you; and the one you
;Prayers: you; intention: you;

'Oh, the verdure, the ever green

Oh, the red that frills the green

Nobler than every pure and clean

No human a parallel to you ever has been.

,O, sweet but staunch and staunch but sweet

.Gapes wide history its mouth for you to spit

-You an iron arm, you the scale of balance

.You sense of the Book and you the Qur'an's essence

And the paces to the earth
.dignity bestow
In your looks interpretation glow,

And become a gravity for galaxies on onward grow

-Divine verses lip and your lips utter

.Wherever you be in you heavens glimmer

Wonder! Oh, wonder! you a wonder' ۱۵۵ My astonishment

ends not if I to ponder

.Foolhardy it is to fathom oceans by a finger

t:۷۶

-Weep we

Gains your blood in our tears constancy

Its seat is in the arena of .tyranny

Our tears a polish and sword in tendency

You are a Qur'an in red

Verses of your bravery wrote the blood

In the desert as far as the sands scud

Those sands turned into a field-

.Rich in red bunches as a shield

Blood is the crop, blood is the yield

Its every branch is a sword, a dagger

.Uproots the tyranny in the noon of its summer

O, Tharallah

!Hence, red is the field and shall he for ever.

!The garden of Eden; lo, what a mania

.You planted in the burning desert of Karbala

,With fruits red

Buds to bloom martyrdom's red

Rivers bloody from bed to bed

.And trees in a row forming a green shade

.Only loveful eyes see with looks in love fed

;Akbar - you and in a quality bred

And the palm trees of consummate red.

.Hurr — not a person but an attribute

:At that side of the river to contribute

.He parted the caravan and its plenitude

;Bridges to a man your word, your look

Towards you he is in a hook

t:۷۷

.As a food in a caravan for a cook

The brains in search of refuge

.Obtain from you light in a deluge

.Desire for envy is a befitting subterfuge

Hurr's bleeding head and your skirt – a fate profuse!

;Good is red after your martyrdom

Tears are daggers in your kingdom. Your pain is the pabulum

For a journey – destination not datum

The track of your blood is the way

Terminates at the God's gateway.

You are from the blood's strain

.And we in your love mad remain

Your blood sands were to sustain

.To gush from stones in a fountain

Oh, the fertile view–

Tyranny has no enemy better than ,you

.To a victim no acquaintance nearer than you

History gets brief in your class

,Hands do not meet at Karbala's pause

;Galaxy of Existence there heats the brass

The worship moves round it, solarium draws.

,Here the word ends

,End too to end tends

❊.At you no end bends

t:٧٨

First published in Message of Thaqalayn, vol. ٢, no. ١*

.http://www.alislam.org/mot/default.asp?url=Track٠fblood.htm

L. ١۶. Hussaini, or Husaini, is an adjective, denoting association, or leaning, toward .Imam al-Husain. The suffix –i is an adjective marker in both Arabic and Persian

L. ١٧. Yazidi signifies association or inclination toward Yazīd (var. Yazid), or having .some of his disgusting characteristics

.Ll. ٢١ and ٢٢. The final –s in the words "Yazidis" and "Hussainis" is English plural marker

L. ١١١. Regarding "Zabeehullah", or "Dhabīh Allāh", "dhabīh" denotes "(blood) sacrifice or oblation"; consequently, "Dhabīh Allāh" means an entity presented as an oblatory sacrifice to the pleasure of Allah. Basically, the title was applied to Ismā'īl (Biblical and English Ishmael; also Samuel), son of Ibrāhīm (Biblical and English) Abraham. In the .Shiite culture, the term is used with a connotation to refer to Imam al-Husain

.(L. ١١٢. "Ismayeel" is a Persianized form of "Ismā'īl" (explained above

."L. ١١۵. "Moharram", a variant form of "Muharram

L. ١٧١. "Tharallah", or "Thār Allāh" is a title of Imam al-Husain. Granted that "Thār" ,"literally means "blood revenge

t:٧٩

vengeance", or simply "retaliation", it occurs frequently in the prescribed ziarat texts" to be read for Imam al-Husain as one of the titles describing Imam al-Husain. In the ziarat contexts, it signifies "the person whose blood revenge will be taken by God."

L. ١٧٢. "The garden of Eden" refers to the Paradise Garden. There are hadiths confirming that the precise site of Imam al-Husain's burial chamber and sanctuary are indeed one of Paradise Gardens in this world.

L. ١٧٩. "Akbar" lit. "elder", is a title of 'Alī b. al-Husain, the elder brother of the fourth Infallible Imam 'Alī b. al-Husain Zayn al-'Ābidīn. Akbar is used here as a shortened form. On Ashura, he was the first of the Hāshimids who went to the battlefield and achieved martyrdom.

L. ١٨١. Hurr b. Yazīd al-Rīyāhī was a renowned man in Kufa. He met Imam al-Husain at a spot called Dhu Hasm, and prevented him from reaching Kufa. He did this on a mission from and at the command of Ibn Zīyād. However, on the day of Ashura, he realized the grave sin he had committed and decided to repent. To accomplish this, he left the army wherein he was a commander, and approached Imam al-Husain's front. Having joined the Imam's army and expressing his repentance, he asked Imam al-Husain if his repentance might be accepted to God. Afterwards, he sought permission from the Imam to fight the enemies and was martyred. He symbolizes last-minute repentance, eternal felicity, and salvation.

t:٨٠

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t:۸۲

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No doubt that the book under consideration is very interesting. I very much .appreciate your effort. God bless you

,HIS GRACE ARCHBISHOP SEBOUH SARKISSIAN

Primate of Tehran Diocese

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About center

In the name of Allah

هَلْيَسْتَوِيالَّذِينَيَعْلَمُونَوَالَّذِينَلَايَعْلَمُونَ

?Are those who know equal to those who do not know

al-Zumar: ۹

:Introduction

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan, from ۲۰۰۷, under the authority of Ayatollah Haj SayyedHasanFaqihImami (God blesses his soul), by sincere and daily efforts of university and seminary elites and sophisticated groups began its activities .in religious, cultural and scientific fields

:Manifesto

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan in order to facilitate and accelerate the accessibility of researchers to the books and tools of research, in the field of Islamic science, and regarding the multiplicity and dispersion of active centers in this field

and numerous and inaccessible sources by a mere scientific intention and far from any kind of social, political, tribal and personal prejudices and currents, based on performing a project in the shape of (management of produced and published works from all Shia centers) tries to provide a rich and free collection of books and research papers for the experts, and helpful contents and discussions for the educated generation and all classes of people interested in reading, with various formats in the .cyberspace

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(propagating the culture and teachings of Thaqalayn (Quran and Ahlulbayt p.b.u.t-

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:Appreciation

We would appreciate the centers, institutes, publications, authors and all honorable .friends who contributed their help and data to us to reach the holy goal we follow

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